

# Gov: Renewable, traditional energy essential to future

BOBBY MAGILL The Daily Sentinel

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SALT LAKE CITY -Coal, natural gas and renewable energy sources should all be on the table in a nationwide, unified effort to achieve energy independence in a time of climate change.

That was the rallying cry of the **Utah**, Wyoming, Montana and Nevada governors Monday at the **Utah** Energy Summit, where they gathered for a transcontinental teleconference of governors and energy industry officials. Nevada's governor participated via videoconference.

Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter was invited to the summit, but was unable to fit it into his schedule, spokesman Evan Dreyer said.

The summit is being held three days this week for the energy industry, government officials and environmental groups to discuss how the West's energy resources should be developed cleanly.

Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman called that challenge the "largest project in history."

Developing new technology to more efficiently exploit traditional and renewable energy sources must be made a national top priority so the United States can become self-sufficient, he said. It must be a global discussion, he said, because China and India are "nipping at our heels" for resources for their own development.

Wyoming Gov. Dave Freudenthal challenged Americans and the federal government to seek solutions to energy security and carbon sequestration -a way of storing emissions from coal-burning power plants to prevent it from polluting the atmosphere -without first knowing all the facts.

"But, our actions should not exceed the information we possess," he said, adding that energy independence and the environment are too important to set aside.

Freudenthal said California's effort to reduce its "carbon footprint" by using more natural gas has serious environmental consequences for Wyoming, even though natural gas production there is good for the state's economy.

Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer warned that "we will lose this country" if energy independence is not achieved. People must make sacrifices while new energy technology is developed.

"Are you willing to consume less?" he said. "What have you done recently? Challenge yourself, challenge your company, challenge your community to consume less."

Nevada Gov. Jim Gibbons said all forms of energy should be part of the solution to energy independence, including nuclear, wind, biomass and coal.

"We've got to stop being so darn competitive to build a national policy that is going to carry the nation to overcome this dependency on foreign sources of oil," he said.

In Colorado on Monday, Ritter unveiled his own renewable energy initiatives.

Ritter set goals for state government facilities to by 2012 reduce energy consumption by 20 percent, reduce the use of petroleum by 25 percent, cut the use of paper by 20 percent and reduce water consumption by 10 percent.

He also signed several bills including: House Bill 1087, which establishes the Wind for Schools grant program; Senate Bill 145, which allows municipalities to offer tax credits to homeowners who install renewable energy-producing fixtures; Senate Bill 126, which authorizes funds for the Renewable Energy Authority; and Senate Bill 51, which establishes criteria for "high performance" state buildings.

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